

# SPOTLIGHT

NEWS  
for the  
PEOPLE of  
CHULA  
VISTA



PHOTO BY MIKE ARMBRUST

## Progress Along the Bayfront

**IT'S FINALLY HAPPENING!** Demolition at the Bayfront this summer will pave the way for development along the City's scenic coastline. Nineteen vacant industrial buildings between H Street and Bay Boulevard, which have been an eyesore for years, will be torn down—the first step in creating a world-class Bayfront.

The Bayfront Master Plan, the product of work by nationally renowned waterfront-design team Cooper Robertson and Partners, the City of Chula Vista, the Port of San Diego

[click here to jump to](#) **On The Bayfront**, continued on page 4

# Bridging Olympic Parkway

**SOON, CROSSING** Olympic Parkway will get easier and safer for bicyclists, students and hikers. In the spring, construction got underway on two new pedestrian bridges that cross over the busy thoroughfare. The bridges connect miles of dedicated pathways that wind through the villages of Heritage, Lomas Verdes, Santa Venetia, and Montecito.

Both bridges will be built over six lanes of traffic and the Poggi Canyon channel. The East Bridge at East Palomar is 414 feet long and will provide a direct link between the village cores of Santa Venetia and Lomas Verdes. The 540 foot long West Bridge will connect Otay Ranch High School and the regional trail that leads up to Heritage Village. Students will be able to cross Olympic Parkway safely and without disrupting traffic.

For recreational walkers, the two bridges will offer unique views



of the Poggi Canyon wetlands and nearby native slopes. The West Bridge will be dedicated to Chula Vista veterans. Construction will cost \$5 million and will be paid for with monies from a pedestrian bridge impact fee and a special Mello-Roos tax levied on the homes in villages that will benefit from the new structures.

Both spans should be open to foot traffic by September. 🌿

## A Tribute to Heroes

**THE CHULA VISTA POLICE DEPARTMENT** headquarters is now home to San Diego County's first and only memorial to police officers in the region who lost their lives in the line of duty. The memorial, located in the public courtyard, features a black semi-circular granite wall and striking bronze statues of two officers—one standing, one kneeling. Heads are bowed as they pay tribute to the fallen and guard the names etched into the wall.

Since 1864, scores of peace officers have died in the line of duty in San Diego County—77 men and women from 14 different agencies. "It gives us all the opportunity to have a place that we can

come by at any time and recognize and honor those who made these sacrifices," said Chula Vista Police Chief Rick Emerson.

For years, there had been much discussion about a county-wide tribute to fallen officers, but it wasn't until Chula Vista was building its new headquarters that the idea took hold. "It just so happened that our building was going up and we had space available. The idea was well received by regional law enforcement," explained Emerson.

A dedication ceremony two months ago drew families of the fallen officers and law enforcement from around the county. Among the guests were the widow and two-year old son of Oceanside police officer Tony Zepetella who was gunned down during a traffic stop. "Having places like this that honor Tony and other officers is really nice when you have a young child," observed Jamie Zepetella. "They'll have a place to come back and see that their loved one is not forgotten."

Entries on the memorial wall date back to 1864, when Sheriff's Deputy Andrew Kriss was killed chasing horse thieves into Mexico. Clarence Henrichon is the one Chula Vista name on the wall. Henrichon died in 1958 from injuries he received in a plane crash during a search for a missing person in the local mountains. 🐾



# Around Town...

## Firefighters Help Burn Institute

Chula Vista firefighters are joining other fire departments from around the county to raise funds for the annual summer camp that helps burn-injured children. Proceeds from the 15th Annual Burn Run and FIRE EXPO on Saturday, July 16 will benefit the Burn Institute's Camp Beyond the Scars.

FIRE EXPO is a free action-packed event for the whole family that raises awareness about fire safety and prevention. Take a ride on a fire engine, watch firefighters rappel down a wall and see helicopter flyovers. FIRE EXPO begins at 11 a.m. on the old San Diego Chargers practice field at Qualcomm Stadium.

The "run" is a caravan of fire trucks that stops at a series of fire stations in Imperial and San Diego Counties for check presentations to the Burn Institute.

For more information about both events, visit [www.burninstitute.org](http://www.burninstitute.org) or call (858) 541-2277.

## Christmas in October

Homeowners who plan to participate in the seventh annual Christmas in October program have until August 1 to turn in their applications.

Every October, hundreds of volunteers grab a paintbrush or a hammer to make a wish come true for a handful of Chula Vista homeowners. The program helps preserve and revitalize houses and communities.

Repairs and improvements are free to selected homeowners who qualify for the program. Participants are often disabled, low-income or elderly. In past years, windows, tile, roofs, pipes, and bathroom fixtures have been replaced. New water heaters, smoke detectors and refrigerators have also been installed.

For applications and information about Christmas in October, call (619) 691-5044 or (619) 691-5213.

## Veteran Award

The City of Chula Vista's Veterans Commission is accepting nominations for the local Veteran of the Year award. Applications—which are due by September 16—are available at the front counter of the Chula Vista Police Department, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## Healthy Lifestyles

Lace up those hiking boots, dust off that bicycle and dig out those in-line skates. The City of Chula Vista's Healthy Lifestyles initiative is making it easy to find fitness activities and learn about good nutrition. Here are the events lined up for the rest of the year.

- *July 17:* Celebrate Parkway Gym's 50th birthday
- *July 30:* Party as the Olympic Training Center turns ten
- *August 28:* Dance to Fattburger and eat healthy treats at Memorial Park
- *September:* Participate in Walk to School week
- *October 23:* Join runners and spectators at the Arturo Barrio race

The initiative, which features a series of fun-filled events almost all year long, is a collaborative effort of the City and its community partners—the U. S. Olympic Training Center, Sweetwater Unified School District, Chula Vista Elementary School District, Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center and EastLake.

For more information on the Healthy Lifestyles program, visit the City's Website at [www.chulavistaca.gov](http://www.chulavistaca.gov).

## Civic Center Aims for Target Date

Interior walls are framed, the roof is on, windows have been installed and the structural steel for the historic tower has been erected. One of the wettest winters on record—23 days of rain—didn't make a major dent in the construction schedule of the new Civic Center. The new City Hall, with its circular state-of-the-art council chambers should be completed close to its late September target date.

It will be more than twice the size of the original building, which opened in 1951 when Chula Vista's population was 16,000. Today's population is an estimated 220,000 people.

Demolition of the older building began in September after crews salvaged many of the Spanish roof tiles. Most of those tiles are being integrated into the roof of the new building—a similar "California mission" architectural design.

As soon as employees move into City Hall, renovations begin on phase two of the Civic Center makeover—the Public Services Building. 🌿





# Coming Soon—the Discovery Center



**A NEW EXPERIENCE** is headed your way when the Discovery Center opens at the Chula Vista Nature Center. The new, multi-million dollar center, now in final design, will bring visitors closer to nature with every step they take.

Wild and exciting new exhibits and state-of-the-art facilities will replace interior displays that have been part of the Nature Center

experience for the past 18 years.

One new exhibit offers a dramatic encounter with endangered Green Sea Turtles. Another highlight, called the Bay Zone, features a huge 3,000 gallon tank that showcases some of San Diego Bay's most interesting deeper water residents like basses, croakers and Spiny lobster.

No one will want to miss the new Steelhead Creek, where a mountain stream flows into a realistic habitat for the Nature Center's special Rainbow Trout. Visitors will be able to watch the trout through windows and peer through an acrylic dome to get an up-close and personal underwater look.

Watch for the grand opening in early 2006! To learn more about the Discovery Center project, including how you can help the Friends of the Chula Vista Nature Center reach their fundraising goal, contact us at (619) 409-5900. And thanks for helping to serve and preserve... naturally! 🐾

## Progress Along the Bayfront

*continued from front page*

and a 29-member Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), envisions a vibrant waterfront with acres of parks, restored nature trails, new retail shops and restaurants, resort hotels, new housing and office buildings, and entertainment venues. Chula Vistans and visitors from throughout the region will be able to enjoy a host of activities in a magnificent setting.

The plan favored by elected officials and the CAC, is to divide the 550-acre Bayfront into three distinct areas with different characteristics.

The **Sweetwater District** to the north includes the Chula Vista Nature Center and Sweetwater Wildlife Refuge. This sector will feature a naturalistic setting with plans for a resort hotel, conference center, restored habitat and nature trails, and office buildings near I-5.

"We specifically planned for the Sweetwater District to have less intense uses in order to preserve the marsh and provide improved access to the Nature Center," said Laurie Madigan, Chula Vista Director of Community Development.

The **Harbor District**, located in the central area of the bayfront, will include a mixture of housing, offices, dining and entertainment areas—all with spectacular views of the waterfront. Plans include a landmark hotel, a signature park near the water's edge and a newly configured marina with room for visitor docking. New retail shops, restaurants, housing and entertainment and cultural arts venues will encircle the harbor.

In the southern area, called the **Otay District**, the plan calls for

relocation of the South Bay Power Plant and the SDG&E switchyard. They would be replaced by new housing and office buildings, a park dedicated to recreation and a lagoon.

Public participation has been a key component in developing the Bayfront Master Plan, and led to a special public outreach award from the San Diego Chapter of the American Planning Association (SDAPA). In addition, Chairman of the Board of Port Commissioners William Hall, who helped spearhead the Chula Vista Bayfront Master Plan, recently received the SDAPA Distinguished Leadership Award.

"As a South Bay resident, I truly believe the Bayfront Master Plan is the most significant investment the Port and the City can make with the greatest potential for return in the form of public benefit," Hall said. 🐾



# Step into Summer

**Music in the Park:** A free public concert series, which begins on June 19 and continues until Sept. 3. The concert schedule will include Saturday and Sunday afternoons and Thursday evenings in various locations throughout the City. For more scheduling information, please check the City's website at [www.chulavistaca.gov](http://www.chulavistaca.gov). Sponsored by the City's Office of Cultural Arts.

**July Fourth Fireworks:** Celebrate Independence Day with a spectacular display of fireworks at the Chula Vista Marina at 9 p.m. Sponsored by the City's Department of Recreation. For more information, please call City of Chula Vista, (619) 585-5682.

**Celebrate Chula Vista** Enjoy this free family festival featuring great food, exciting entertainment, Business Expo, attractions for the kids, fireworks and more! The action begins at noon until 9 p.m. in Bayside Park on July 4. Sponsored by the Chula Vista Chamber of Commerce, Port of San Diego and City of Chula Vista. For more information, please call (619) 420-6603.

**Parkway Gym's 50th Anniversary:** Celebrate the golden anniversary of Parkway Gym and Pool on July 17 from noon to 10 p.m. at the Parkway Complex. Tons of activities are planned including an oldies concert in Memorial Bowl from 3 to 6 p.m., skills con-

tests, badminton and a three-on-three basketball tournament, a recreational swim offered at a 1950s admission price of ten cents, a diving demonstration and lessons, inner-tube water polo



and evening "dive-in" movies at the pool. Don't miss the carnival games, crafts, climbing wall and air jump at the Community Center. Please check the City's website at [www.chulavistaca.gov](http://www.chulavistaca.gov) for more details!

**Lemon Festival:** Free family festival on Aug. 14 celebrating Chula Vista's history as the lemon capital of the U.S., Includes live entertainment on two stages, a classic car show, beer gardens, kids fun zone, food and art. The fun begins at 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Third Avenue between E to H Streets. Sponsored by the Downtown Business Association, (619) 422-1982.

**Taste of Third Art Walk:**

Self-guided walking tour of downtown Chula Vista restaurants with taste samples, local artists and live music from 5 to 8 p.m. on Sept. 22. For ticket information and further details, please call the Downtown Business Association, (619) 422-1982.

**Southwestern College Farmers' Market and Open Air Bazaar** A new location to get fresh fruits and veggies straight from the fields! Produce, flowers, specialty foods, crafts and more available every Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Southwestern College in parking lot "O." For more information, please call (619) 237-1632.

*For more information about events taking place in Chula Vista throughout the year, please call the City's special events hotline at (619) 585-5682; or visit the "Calendar" page on the City's Web site at [www.chulavistaca.gov](http://www.chulavistaca.gov).* 🍌



## EastLake Parkway Detour

**AS CONSTRUCTION** of the new SR 125 toll road moves closer to our neighborhoods, residents will experience a few challenges. EastLake Parkway commuters are using a temporary detour road for the next eight months while construction crews build a bridge over the new toll road. The two-lane detour, built by the toll road's contractor, diverts traffic from a short stretch of EastLake Parkway between Miller and Ridgewater Drives.

When the SR 125 is completed, it will intersect EastLake



Parkway at ground level. As a result, the builder is raising the level of EastLake Parkway and building a bridge to cross over the toll road. During construction, the 6,500 cars that use EastLake Parkway everyday will use the temporary detour road that parallels the parkway. Bright orange signs along the route alert motorists to a reduced speed limit of 25 mph.

SR 125 South will complete an important link in the San Diego freeway network, helping to reduce traffic congestion on surface streets in Chula Vista and Bonita. Commuters driving the future SR 125 South from Chula Vista to Otay Mesa are expected to reduce driving time up to 75 percent. The toll road is scheduled to open in late 2006. 🍌

# A Big Step on a New Trail

## THE OTAY VALLEY

Regional Park, one of the largest stretches of open space in the county, links south San Diego Bay with the Otay lakes. Miles of natural habitat provide a home for native trees and plants and an abundance of wildlife. Soon, students and residents will be enjoying this remarkable resource from a unique perspective—the Finney School Overlook.

Perched above the regional park, Finney School Overlook will offer more than breathtaking views; it will serve as an educational and recreational retreat for nearby elementary school students and the public. Already under construction, the project will feature two outdoor classroom amphitheaters, a public viewing deck with interpretive signs and picnic tables.

Finney School Overlook, the first new project to begin construction since the concept of the Otay Valley Regional Park was approved, will also be an access point to future trails in the park. Partners include the Chula Vista Elementary School District, the county, and the cities of Chula Vista and San Diego. Designed with an aviation theme that recognizes the historic glider flights of the

legendary John Montgomery, the overlook will include shade awnings in the shape of wings and a plaza incorporating a propeller design.

Creation of the regional park began as an effort to protect and preserve the Otay River Valley while providing some opportunities for active recreation. Years have been spent acquiring open space land as well as designing trails and coordinating issues of park management. In the years ahead, look for a host of recreational activities ranging from playing fields and picnic areas to hiking, biking, and horse trails. At the same time, the park will continue with its main objective—protecting an irreplaceable natural resource. 🌿



PHOTO BY MIKE ARMBRUST

## CHULA VISTA SPOTLIGHT



### City Council

Stephen C. Padilla, Mayor  
Patty Davis  
John McCann  
Jerry R. Rindone  
Steve Castaneda

### City Manager

David D. Rowlands, Jr.

The Chula Vista Spotlight newsletter is published five times per year and is distributed as a public service to residents and businesses by the City of Chula Vista. Copies are also available at various locations around the city. Send comments or inquiries to the Office of Communications, City of Chula Vista, 276 Fourth Avenue, Chula Vista, CA 91910. The city's Web page address is [www.chulavista.ca.gov](http://www.chulavista.ca.gov)